

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Fruitland Magnesium Fire Incident - Removal Polrep  
Initial Removal Polrep

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
**Region IX**

**Subject: POLREP #1**  
**Emergency Response and Use of Delegated Procurement Authority**  
**Fruitland Magnesium Fire Incident**

**Maywood, CA**  
**Latitude: 33.9961640 Longitude: -118.2011630**

**To:** Harry Allen, EPA Region 9  
Trevor Anderson, Cal Emergency Management Agency  
Celeste Temple, EPA Region 9  
Tito Irizarry, EPA Office of Emergency Management  
Peter Guria, EPA Region 9  
Enrique Manzanilla, EPA Region 9  
Lance Richman, EPA Region 9  
Kathryn Lawrence, Preparedness and Prevention Section  
Craig Benson, EPA Region 9  
Barbara Lee, EPA Region 9  
Jason Musante, EPA Region 9  
Libby Vianu, ATSDR  
Paul Penn, CALEPA  
George Baker, DTSC  
Rebekah Reynolds, EPA  
Kristine Wilson, EPA CID  
Joseph Johns, USAO  
Angela Vallier, USCG IMAT  
Jeff Reeb, LACo OEM  
Ruben Martinez, City of Maywood  
Silvia Prieto, LACoPH  
William Jones, LACoFD HHMD  
Tony Payne, LACoFD HHMD  
Stella Fogleman, LACoPH  
JJ Winston, USCG PST

**From:** Robert Wise, OSC

**Date:** 6/18/2016

**Reporting Period:** 06/14-18/2016

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

<b>Site Number:</b>		<b>Contract Number:</b>	
<b>D.O. Number:</b>		<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	
<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b>	EPA	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	6/14/2016	<b>Start Date:</b>	6/14/2016
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>Completion Date:</b>	
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>		<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>		<b>State Notification:</b>	
<b>FPN#:</b>		<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

#### **1.1.1 Incident Category**

Magnesium fire at a metal recycling and stripping company.

#### **1.1.2 Site Description**

On June 14, 2016 at approximately 0200 hours, a fire started at Panda International Trading (PIT) located at 3570 Fruitland Ave., Maywood, CA. Fruitland Ave. is a commercial/light manufacturing district. The facility holds two businesses, PIT and SOKOR Metals. PIT is a scrap metal yard that send scrap metal out in bulk for recovery.

---

SOKOR is a precious metals recovery operation that recovers precious metals from circuit boards and other electronics. The site originally consisted of several buildings, but all were destroyed in the fire.

During the fire approximately 300 people on Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy  
**Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy** were evacuated.

The evacuation was lifted homes on the Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy Street on June 16, 2016, by LACoFD. The homes of the Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy it borders the site have remained evacuated due to the presence of ash throughout the properties. Approximately 31 families remain evacuated and are staying at a Red Cross Shelter.

#### 1.1.2.1 Location

The site is located at 3570 Fruitland Ave., Maywood, Los Angeles Co., CA 90702 (Latitude: 33.9961640 Longitude: -118.2011630). On the southern fence line of the site is a residential neighborhood of single family homes. To the north, east and west is are light industry.

#### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

At the PIT site there is approximately 10,000 pounds of magnesium. On the morning of June 14, 2016, during firefighting operations, the magnesium exploded twice, showering Fruitland Ave. and the adjacent residential neighborhood with chunks of burning magnesium. Due to the hazards associated with fighting this fire, the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) has adopted a defensive firefighting mode and is allowing the fire to burn. EPA assistance was requested by LACoFD Health Hazmat Division (HHMD). Upon arriving EPA was tasked with providing air surveillance for the fire. OSC Wise delegated the EPA START contractor with this task.

At 1700 hours on June 16, 2016, EPA was referred the site by LACoFD Health Hazmat Division and OSC R. Wise initiated a CERCLA removal action using his delegated procurement authority. EPA is in a Unified Command with LACo Public Health (LACoPH). The site meets the meets the following criteria pursuant to 40 CFR 300.415(b)(2) of the NCP:

- (i) Actual or potential exposure to nearby human

<p>populations, animals, or the food chain from hazardous substances or pollutants or contaminants;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (iii) Hazardous substances or pollutants or contaminants in drums, barrels, tanks, or other bulk storage containers, that may pose a threat of release;</li> <li>• (iv) High levels of hazardous substances or pollutants or contaminants in soils largely at or near the surface, that may migrate;</li> <li>• (v) Weather conditions that may cause hazardous substances or pollutants or contaminants to migrate or be released;</li> </ul> <p>(vi) Threat of fire or explosion;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (vii) The availability of other appropriate federal or state response mechanisms to respond to the release; and</li> <li>• (viii) Other situations or factors that may pose threats to public health or welfare of the United States or the environment.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results</b></p> <p>On June 14, 2016, EPA initiated an air surveillance program. The air monitoring parameters included real-time instruments for volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO), lower explosive limit (LEL); percent oxygen, hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), hydrogen cyanide (HCN), and total particulates. The air sampling parameters include total metals and HCN. This air surveillance program was kept in place until the morning of July 16, 2016, when the fire was extinguished. The monitoring data for all parameters other than total particulates was within background concentrations. The total particulates concentrations were up to 11 mg/m<sup>3</sup> in heavy smoke. The air sampling data for June 14 and documented the presence of the following metals in low concentrations (2-5 orders of magnitude below the OSHA PEL): aluminum, arsenic, chrome, cadmium, copper, lead, vanadium, and zinc. The data for June 16 is pending.</p> <p>On June 15, 2016, the START at the direction of the OSC collected four ash samples. The samples were collected from</p>			

the northwest corner of Fruitland Ave. and Everett Court; the perimeter of the site and to residences on the southern perimeter of the site. On July 16, 2016, the START contractor conducted a preliminary XRF analysis of the ash that documented elevated concentrations of arsenic, chrome, copper, lead and zinc. On June 17, 2016, the samples were submitted for laboratory analysis for total metals, VOCs, semi-VOCs and dioxins/furans. The total metals data was available in the evening of June 17, 2016 confirmed elevated concentrations of metals including copper and zinc. The remaining analytical parameters are pending.

On June 15, 2016, EPA in cooperation with the Unified Command partners, HHMD and LACoPH initiated a program of indoor air sampling to determine if contaminated ash had entered the homes that bordered the southern perimeter of the site. The program is an activity based sampling in which a fan is placed in the room to rouse the dust (simulating people walking in the room) and two samples for total metals are then collected. One sampler is placed at the breathing zone for children and the other at the breathing zone for adults. The sampling takes place of a four hour period. The analysis data is pending. The first sample location was from the home that is directly behind the burning magnesium pile in a room where the windows were blown out. The next two samples were collected from homes bordering the southern border of the site in which the windows are in-tact. The sampling program is on-going, but is slow due to the fact that the homes are evacuated and getting signed access has been difficult.

On June 17, 2016, the EPA team made a level B entry into the site to conduct air monitoring. Monitoring was conducted using a Multi-Rae Pro multi-gas meter, a Ludlum Model 19 gamma dose rate meter and a Lumex mercury meter. No airborne contaminants were detected. The site has been downgraded to a level C site.

On June 18, 2015, EPA, DTSC and HHMD begun assessments of the exterior of the evacuated properties and it was completed on June 19, 2016. The assessments determined that every home on the site has ash contamination. **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy**

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

### 2.1.1 Narrative

OSC Wise has mobilized to an ongoing fire in Maywood, CA on June 14, 2016. The fire started early on the morning of June 14, 2016 at 3570 Fruitland Ave., Maywood CA. This address included a scrap metal export business and a precious metals recovery business. The fire ignited approximately 10,000 pounds of magnesium ingots stored at the scrap metal exporter. During firefighting operations, the magnesium exploded several times after contact with the firefighting water. Approximately 300 people were evacuated from the **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy** Maywood. Approximately 45 people remain evacuated. No injuries are reported but the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) has issued a smoke advisory and are assessing possible toxic concerns and responding to odor complaints. The LACoFD prevented the fire from spreading to any other businesses and homes, while allowing the magnesium to fully combust. HHMD on scene and requested assistance from Region 9 in handling contaminated firefighting water and with air surveillance.

The fire was extinguished by June 16, 2016, but ash is strewn throughout the neighborhood, on surfaces of buildings, cars as well as in yards and parking areas. Sampling by EPA have documented that the ash contains elevated levels of lead, manganese, copper and zinc. Homes on **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy** it have been reoccupied but homes on **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy** to the facility, remain evacuated pending safe occupancy determinations by LA County health officials. A total of 12 properties remain evacuated, some of which have multi-family dwellings on them.

The Unified Command has requested EPA to conduct air sampling inside homes situated on these 12 parcels and that effort is began on June 16, 2016. Air samples will be collected and analyzed for metals only. Data will be provided to health officials for re-occupancy determinations. In addition, EPA collected ash samples throughout the area yesterday. Locations included a parking lot, the facility perimeter and the surface of 2 residences. These samples

were analyzed for metals, VOCs, semi-VOCs and dioxins/furans and results are pending. Results over CA regulated waste levels (TTLIC) may require physical removal and disposal. An entry team plans on entering the facility boundary to characterize the burn area tomorrow.

Unified Command at the Incident has shifted from LA County Fire and Sheriff to EPA Region 9, LA County Health and County Health Hazmat, EPA and LACoPH. DTSC ER has begun to coordinate on the Site as well and has tentatively agreed to dispose contaminated firefighting water. Potentially Responsible Parties have been issued letters of Federal Interest the Region's Civil Investigators and attorney advisor are reviewing the case as well.

On June 16, 2016 OSC Robert Wise utilized his delegated procurement authority to dispatch the ERRS contractor to conduct emergency removal action. EPA is participating in an Unified Command with HHMD and LACoPH.

## 2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

June 14, 2016

Agencies Present: EPA, LACoFD, LACoPH, Vernon Fire Department (VFD), Vernon Police Department (VPD), Los Angeles Co. Sheriffs (LACoSD) and AQMD

Contractors Present: START

EPA mobilized to the scene. The LACoFD was monitoring the fire, but only conducting defensive operations due to the presence of the magnesium. OSC Wise deployed the START contractor. The START contractor began air surveillance operations as described in Section 1.1.3. The AQMD was also collection air samples. EPA integrated into the Unified Command

**June 15, 2016**

Agencies Present: EPA, LACoFD, LACoPH, VFD, VPD, LACoSD and AQMD

Contractors Present: START			
LACoFD is continuing fire fighting operations. The START and AQMD continued air surveillance. The START collected ash samples to characterize it. See Section 1.1.3 for more information.			
<b>June 16, 2016</b>			
Agencies Present: EPA, LACoFD, LACoPH, VFD, VPD, LACoSD and AQMD			
Contractors Present: START, ERRS, United Pumping (LACoFD and ERRS sub), PES (VFD)			
LACoFD is completed fire fighting operations. The START and SCAQMD continued air surveillance. The START collected ash samples conducted field characterization of the ash samples using the XRF. See Section 1.1.3 for more information.			
The LACoFD conducted a gross decontamination of the homes along 52nd Street using fire hoses. They contracted with Patriot Environment Services (PES) to collect the water. The VFD conducted similar operations of the businesses situated downwind of the facility. VFD hired United Pumping Services to collect the water.			
Based on the data that the ash meets the criteria for California toxic hazardous waste, OSC Wise used his delegated procurement authority to dispatch the ERRS contractor. The ERRS contractor entered into a subcontract with United Pumping who was already on-site to clean the streets and sidewalks in the command post area (Fruitland Ave. between Everett Ave. and Maywood Ave. and approximately 100 meter of Everett Court north of Fruitland Ave. The ERRS contractor worked throughout the night. United Pumping placed a 22,000 gallon water collection tank in front of the facility to store the decontamination water that they and PES had generated. OSC Wise negotiated with DTSC Emergency Response for the State to pay for the disposal of the water.			
The START contractor began to conducted activity based sampling in the impacted homes. See QASP in the			



documents section for details.	One home was sampled.		
OSC Wise met with the Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) and their insurance company. Coverage information is pending.			
OSC Wise requested assistance from the Pacific Strike Team (PST). They will be on-site on Saturday. They will function as the Site Safety Officer (SSO) and the Planning Section Chief.			
<b>June 17, 2016</b>			
Agencies Present: EPA, LACoFD, LACoPH, VFD, VPD, and LACoSD			
Contractors Present: START, ERRS, United Pumping (ERRS sub)			
The EPA ERRS contractor, subcontractor United Pumping continued to clean the sidewalks along Fruitland. United Pumping also began to conduct water removal operations from the 3570 Fruitland site location to prevent off-site migration of contaminated fire suppression water. United Pumping also began to clean the drainage culvert boxes on Fruitland. OSC Wise stopped their operations because they conducting an improper permit confined space entry. After discussion of this issue with the ERRS Response Manage (RM), OSC Wise directed the RM to dismiss United Pumping and replace them with Double Barrel Environmental Services, a regular ERRS teaming sub.			
The START continued indoor air sampling in the homes. Two homes were sampled.			
The START contractor was appointed as the head of the Sampling Group under the Unified Command. The ERRS RM will serve as the Operations Section Chief until replaced by OSC Jason Musante on Monday.			
<b>June 18, 2016</b>			
Agencies Present: EPA, LACoFD, LACoPH, VFD, VPD, and LACoSD			
Contractors Present: START, ERRS, Double Barrel (ERRS			

Team Sub)					
<p>The ERRS contractor continued to clean areas along Fruitland Ave. of ash. ERRS finished cleaning the drainage culvert boxes.</p> <p>The START collected samples from the inside of two homes. The START worked with HHMD personnel to begin the assessment of the home sites for ash and other contaminants from the fire. Six homes were completed. The START set up a geoviewer and SCRIBE for this site.</p> <p>OSC Wise deployed ERT and SERAS for arrival on Sunday. One member of the PST arrived on-site. Chief J.J. Winston will act as the Incident Safety Officer. The START is deploying an Certified Industrial Hygienist and air sampling specialist at OSC Wise's request to assist PST.</p> <p><b>2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)</b></p> <p>OSC Wise issued a Notice of Federal Response Action to Mr. Pan on June 15, 2016 notifying him of his liability and requesting he conduct cleanup operations. He replied on June 17, 2016 that he was refusing to conduct the grounds of financial inability.</p> <p><b>2.1.4 Progress Metrics</b></p>					
<i><b>Waste Stream</b></i>	<i><b>Medium</b></i>	<i><b>Quantity</b></i>	<i><b>Manifest #</b></i>	<i><b>Treatment</b></i>	<i><b>Disposition</b></i>

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--



--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--

## 2.2 Planning Section

### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

Activities for June 19, 2016 will include:

- Cleaning of 52nd Street and sidewalks between Everett Ave. and Maywood Ave.;
- Gross decontamination of cars parked on 52nd Street the night of the fire. The car owners will then be provided a voucher to take the car to a car wash for a thorough cleaning.;
- Residential assessments; and
- Sampling of decontamination water tank;

#### 2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

Removal operations will include the following:

- Completion of the residential assessments;
- Decontamination of the homes on the street between **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy** Ave.;
- Decontamination of any streets or sidewalks contaminated with ash; and
- Removal of all hazardous substances from the site.

#### 2.2.1.2 Next Steps

The schedule through Thursday of next week is as follows:

Monday:

- Apply Guerilla Snot soil tacifier to site to keep down dust;
- Install roads through debris on-site to allow access to all areas of the site (air surveillance for this activity);
- Finish residential assessments and
- Begin residential decontamination.

Tuesday:

## 2.3 Logistics Section

## 2.4 Finance Section

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue residential decontaminations;</li> <li>Conduct a container inventory and sampling on-site; and</li> <li>Explore magnesium removal.</li> </ul> <p>Wednesday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue residential decontaminations;</li> <li>Continue container inventory and sampling and repackage any leaking containers; and</li> <li>Magnesium collection (air surveillance for this activity).</li> </ul> <p>Thursday-Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue residential decontamination.</li> </ul> <p><b>2.2.2 Issues</b></p> <p>A Joint Information Center has been set up and EPA does not have adequate representation on-site.</p> <p>LACoPH is serving as the Logistics Section Chief for the Unified Command. The ERRS contractor is handling logistics for EPA.</p> <p>On June 16, 2016, OSC Wise notified Alex Kramer, EPA Contracting Officer that he was utilizing his delegated procurement authority to dispatch the ERRS contractor. A START TDD has also been opened. On June 18, 2016, OSC Wise requested the ERRS TO be increased to \$685,000 and sent a START TDD amendment raising the ceiling to 380,000.</p>				
<b>Estimated Costs</b>	<b>*Budgeted</b>	<b>Total To Date</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>% Remaining</b>
<b>Extramural Costs</b>				
ERRS - Cleanup Contractor	\$185,000.00	\$0.00	\$185,000.00	0.00%
IAGs - PST	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	100.00%
TAT/START	\$68,341.00	\$34,933.00	\$33,408.00	48.88%



<b>Intramural Costs</b>				
<b>Total Site Costs</b>	\$268,341	\$84,933.00	\$233,408	86.98%

\* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

## **2.5 Other Command Staff**

### **2.5.1 Safety Officer**

The SSO is the PST.

### **2.5.2 Liaison Officer**

The Liaison Officer is being staffed by LACoPH.

### **2.5.3 Information Officer**

An EPA PIO has been requested for deployment, but declined by OPA. A JIC has been staffed up and the lead PIO is LACoPH.

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

The Unified Commanders are EPA, LACoFD HHMS and LACoPH.

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

**LACoSD, VFD, VPD, SCAQMD, LACoISD; DTSC, EPA CID, City of Maywood, City of Vernon.**

## **4. Personnel On Site**

June 14, 2016:

EPA: OSC Wise

START: 5

June 15, 2016:

EPA: OSC Wise

START: 5

June 16-18, 2016

EPA: OSC Wise

START: 4

ERRS: 7

June 19:

EPA: OSC Wise, J. Eckelson (ERT)

SERAS: 2

START: 3

ERRS: 7

## **5. Definition of Terms**

AQMD: South Coast Air Quality Management District

CERCLA: Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

Co.: County

DTSC: Department of Toxic Substances

EPA: Environmental Protection Agency

ERRS: Emergency and Rapid Removal Services (EPA Contractor)

ERT: Environmental Response Team

HCN: Hydrogen Cyanide

HHMD: Health Hazardous Materials Division

LACoFD: Los Angeles County Fire Department

LACoPH: Los Angeles County Public Health

LACoSD: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

NCP: National Contingency Plan (40 CFR 300)

OSC: On--Scene Coordinator

OSHA: Occupational Safety and Health Administration

PEL: Permissible Exposure Limit

PES: Patriot Environmental Services

PRP: Potentially Responsible Party

PST: Pacific Strike Team

PIT: Panda International Trading Co.

RM: Removal Manager

SERAS: Science, Engineering, Response and Analytical Support contractor

SOKOR: SOKOR Metals

START: Superfund Technical Assessment Response Team contractor

TTLC: Total Threshold Limit Concentration

VFD: Vernon Fire Department

VOCs: Volatile Organic Compounds

VPD: Vernon Police Department

XRF: X-Ray Fluorescence Spectrometer

## **6. Additional sources of information**

### **6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

The website for this site is located [www.epaosc.org/FruitlandMgFire](http://www.epaosc.org/FruitlandMgFire).

## **6.2 Reporting Schedule**

The next POLREP will be June 23, 2016.

## **7. Situational Reference Materials**

See the IAPs in Documents Section.